A U M

Philosophy as well as religion has always taught that the soul is purified and strengthened by suffering, and it is sometimes well to suffer. —WILLIAM Q. JUDGE

# THEOSOPHY

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## BEYOND COMPARISON

THERE is a side of the mind which is unable to function without making comparisons; men conceive goals and objectives in relationship to, or in terms of, something else. This capacity or phase of the mind is plainly indispensable for practical purposes, since measurement depends upon it, and, therefore, all the achievements of science and engineering in which measurement plays a part.

But when a human being sets about "measuring" other human beings—comparing them, and himself with them—he is likely to miss the meaning of his life, and the scientist here runs a greater risk than the artist. The sciences—at least, the sciences as we know them—take no account of the mystical reality of the individual soul. There is that in every soul which entirely eludes comparison, and when, in respect to matters which involve the life of soul, one man is compared with another, the soul eludes the comparer. The psychologist, Karl Jung, once remarked that intellectuals may make excellent specialists in medicine, but are seldom good nurses. The specialist deals with a more or less abstract subject—the disease in which he specializes—whereas the nurse is concerned with the uniquely individual patient.

In this way we may illustrate the differing qualities of higher and lower mind. Since the skills of lower *manas* are easy to distinguish, capable of being measured by examination, they gain particular honors in our civilization. The qualities of the higher mind, on the other hand, are subtle, involving the sympathies as well as the imagination. Science and statistics can have no traffic with either, so that, in common experience, the over-intellectualized mind tends to dislike the sympathies as incommensurable, to fear and reject the imagination as contributing an unpredictable element to experience.

In a Golden Age, perhaps, the good nurse would be honored above the skilled specialist, not because specialized knowledge is worthless, but because it is the sort of thing that anyone can acquire by hard work, whatever the motives, whereas warm-heartedness and attentiveness to the needs of others spring from an inclination of the spirit. These latter cannot be purchased by burning the midnight oil, nor out of insatiable ambition. They belong to those who do not live out their lives incessantly comparing one achievement with another. The highest is an uncalculating mood, an unexpecting attitude of mind.

All ordinary men, doubtless, pass from a comparing to a sympathetic mood, many times in even a day. One rides along a city street, noticing casually the children playing on the sidewalk. If the neighborhood is a poor one, the children may be ragged and dirty, like children in poor neighborhoods the world over. It is difficult to think of these children except as an impersonal part of the scenery. Yet if the car has to stop while the occupants change a tire, one or two of the children may begin to take on definite character. If there is conversation with them, and if one child seems a little unusual, the impact of the child's individuality soon erases the comparative mood. Instead of a mere statistic, we encounter something which is beyond comparison—a mind responding in a way that no other mind would respond.

It is in a simple experience of this sort that we come face to face with the reality of human beings. It is the originality of human consciousness which makes comparison irrelevant. The child, of course, may himself fall into comparisons. He may express a longing to be like another child, or to have what another child has. We are not impressed by this. Or he may speak deprecatingly of someone. We are not impressed by this, either. These are qualities in human nature we do not find admirable. It is when the child speaks for himself, expressing interest in his own discoveries, with confidence in what *he* will do, that we feel the contact or impact of another *being*.

A child thinking for himself has the validity of an original cause. Whatever the child says or thinks, it has the power of a new influence set loose in human experience, and must be respected as such. That is why the teacher of the second grade finds her vocation as rich as the teacher of the fourth grade finds hers. There is of course a difference between the second and the fourth grade, but this difference is easily traversed in the brief interval of twenty-four months. It does not

trouble us that the child we love has reached only the second grade. Rather it would trouble us if the child were unnaturally envious of the older children in the grades beyond.

But, sometimes, a sense of the suitability of these differences is lost upon reaching the great amorphous "average" of adulthood. Here we are confronted by less acceptable differences. In the world, both men and women are goaded by the comparisons insistently put upon them in the worship of "success." It takes a fairly strong and stable nature to remain immune to the competitive standards of the world. Often, also, men pretend to be indifferent to the goals of worldly success, because so few can actually reach them, and this, unhappily, is a worse situation than not reaching the goals, for it involves progressive self-deception and hypocritical self-justification.

The child, when he is interested in himself, "personal" though this interest be, is at least not yet captive to the heresy of comparison. He has not yet surrendered his self-respect. It is the world which tends to take away the child's respect for himself, by insisting that the child compare himself with others and measure himself by others.

Some may argue that there is no other way than this to prevent a slack and effortless pursuit of the line of least resistance. Perhaps what others do does supply some sort of "norm" for the measure of outside achievement, but the demand of the world is that both children and men *equal* what others do, instead of responding to the call of high endeavor. It is here, in the need for quiet acceptance of the differences among men, that the immeasurable importance of reincarnation becomes plain. For with but a single life to live, how can effort be recognized as having greater value than actual achievement? If we are to be judged by a single lifetime's work, how can we hope to stand comparison with the many others who surpass us so easily?

So the irrationalism of religious dogma, or the irrationalism of mechanistic theories of human origin, through heredity and environmental conditionings, is seen to satisfy the terrible question which men ask themselves when they seem to be failures in the eyes of their fellows. God or the genes are at least a cause which can be assigned for our misfortune, and so we accept the distant irrationalism to assuage the pain of an immediate one—the one which makes us hate ourselves for not "measuring up" to the marker which the world defines as success.

This is an attitude which is seldom abandoned all at once. The man who joyfully embraces the teachings of Karma and Reincarnation, having at last found a freedom of mind he never knew before, may not find freedom of *feeling* as easily. He, even as Arjuna, learns that he has his habits to contend with. Now he makes his comparisons with a new objective in mind—the goal of spiritual enlightenment. The "unattainable" in worldly things is replaced by the unattainable in higher matters. Yet, actually, there is far less excuse for the habit of comparison in this case. For one who has knowledge of the ancient wisdom of the soul, it is a kind of sickness of mind to be thinking of other people in these terms. What have we to do with their judging? The disciple has before him the teaching of the two aspects of mind; like a blueprint to be followed by a builder, the metaphysics of Theosophy has only to be rendered into the three dimensions of daily life. It is not a simple thing, perhaps, but it can be done. The transition from captivity to comparisons to the freedom of self-reliance is the first great step of self-discovery. It is the full sense of realization that, whatever others have done, no one can do what we can do, and that what we can do is as important as anything else in the universe, since, as we do it, we once again declare, for all who will listen, the secret of human life.

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Reflection should cause one to take his present personality with a large grain of salt, viewing it no longer humorlessly as his absolute self, but rather, in imaginative perspective, as but one of the various personalities which his individuality was equally capable of generating had it happened to enter phenomenal history through birth in a different environment. Thus, to the question: What is it that could be supposed to be reborn? an intelligible answer may be returned by saying that it might be the core of positive and negative aptitudes and tendencies which we have called a man's individuality, as distinguished from his personality. And the fact might further be that, perhaps as a result of persistent striving to acquire a skill or trait he desires, but for which he now has but little gift, aptitude for it in future births would be generated and incorporated into his individuality.

—C. J. DUCASSE

# THEOSOPHY OR JESUITISM?

## I

> "Choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites."—JOSHUA, xxiv., 15.

"The thirteenth number of *Le Lotus,* the recognised organ of Theosophy, among many articles of undeniable interest, contains one by Madame Blavatsky in reply to the Abbé Roca. The eminent writer, who is certainly the most learned woman of our acquaintance,[1] discusses the following question: *'Has Jesus ever existed'?*[2] She destroys the Christian legend, in its details, at least, with irrecusable texts which are not usually consulted by religious historians.

"This article is producing a profound sensation in the Catholic and Judeo-Catholic swamp: we are not surprised at this, for the author's arguments are such as it is difficult to break down, even were one accustomed to the Byzantine disputes of theology."—PARIS, Evening paper, of May 12, 1888.

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THE series of articles, one of which is referred to in the above quotation from a well-known French evening paper, was originally called forth by an article in *Le Lotus* by the Abbé Roca, a translation of which was published in the January number of LUCIFER.

These articles, it would seem, have stirred up many slumbering animosities. They appear, in particular, to have touched the Jesuit party in France somewhat nearly. Several correspondents have written calling attention to the danger incurred by Theosophists in raising up against themselves such virulent and powerful foes. Some of our

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NOTE.—In this article, first appearing as the editorial in *Lucifer* for June, 1888, H.P.B. recorded some of the facts which explain her militant opposition to the Church of Rome. In *Lucifer* for July, 1889, she wrote of the Theosophical Society on this subject: "It recognizes and knows of, and therefore avoids its representatives in its ranks—but one enemy—an enemy common to all, namely, Roman Catholicism, and that only because of auricular confession." Today, among all forms of Christianity, Catholicism alone maintains an effective hold on the minds of its followers, the reason being that given by H.P.B. The present crisis of modern civilization, with the resultant agitation for a return to revealed religion, makes the reprinting of "Theosophy or Jesuitism?" a timely warning. (This article was last reprinted in THEOSOPHY for September and October, 1940.) —Editors, THEOSOPHY.

[1] The humble individual of that name renders thanks to the editor of PARIS: not so much for the flattering opinion expressed as for the rare surprise to find the name of "Blavatsky," for once, neither preceded nor followed by any of the usual abusive epithets and adjectives which the highly cultured English and American newspapers and their gentlemanly editors are so fond of coupling with the said cognomen.—[ED.]

[2] The question is rather: Did the "historical" Jesus ever exist?—[ED.]

friends would have us keep silent on these topics. Such is not, however, the policy of LUCIFER, nor ever will be. Therefore, the present opportunity is taken to state, once for all, the views which Theosophists and Occultists entertain with regard to the Society of Jesus. At the same time, all those who are pursuing in life's great wilderness of vain evanescent pleasures and empty conventionalities *an ideal worth living for,* are offered the choice between the two now once more rising powers—the Alpha and the Omega at the two opposite ends of the realm of giddy, idle existence—THEOSOPHY and JESUITISM.

For, in the field of religious and intellectual pursuits, these two are the only luminaries—a *good* and an *evil* star, truly—glimmering once more from behind the mists of the Past, and ascending on the horizon of mental activities. They are the only two powers capable in the present day of extricating one thirsty for intellectual life from the clammy slush of the stagnant pool known as Modern Society, so crystallized in its cant, so dreary and monotonous in its squirrel-like motion around the wheel of fashion. Theosophy and Jesuitism are the two opposite poles, one far above, the other far below even that stagnant marsh. Both offer power—one to the spiritual, the other to the psychic and intellectual Ego in man. The former is "the wisdom that is from *above* . . . pure, peaceable, gentle . . . full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy," while the latter is "the wisdom that *descendeth not from above,* but is earthly, sensual, DEVILISH."[3] One is the power of Light, the other that of Darkness. . . .

A question will surely be asked: "Why should anyone choose between the two? Cannot one remain in the world, a good Christian of whatever church, without gravitating to either of these poles?" Most undeniably, one can do so, for a few more years to come. But the cycle is rapidly approaching the last limit of its turning point. One out of the three great churches of Christendom is split into atomic sects, whose number increases yearly; and a house divided against itself, as is the Protestant Church—MUST FALL. The third, the Roman Catholic, the only one that has hitherto succeeded in appearing to retain all its integrity, is rapidly decaying from within. It is honeycombed throughout, and is being devoured by the ravenous microbes begotten by Loyola.

It is no better now than a Dead Sea fruit, fair for some to look at, but full of the rottenness of decay and death within. Roman Catholi-

[3] James' General Epistle, chapter iii, 15, 17.

cism is but a name. As a Church it is a phantom of the Past and a mask. It is absolutely and indissolubly bound up with, and fettered by the Society of Ignatius Loyola; for, as rightly expressed by Lord Robert Montagu, "The Roman Catholic Church is (now) the largest Secret Society in the world, beside which Freemasonry is but a pigmy." Protestantism is slowly, insidiously, but as surely, infected with Latinism—the new ritualistic sects of the High Church, and such men among its clergy as Father Rivington, being undeniable evidence of it. In fifty years more at the present rate of success of Latinism among the "upper ten," the English aristocracy will have returned to the faith of King Charles II, and its servile copyist—mixed Society—will have followed suit. And then the Jesuits will begin to reign alone and supreme over the Christian portions of the globe, for they have crept even into the Greek Church.

It is vain to argue and claim a difference between Jesuitism and Roman Catholicism proper, for the latter is now sucked into and inseparably amalgamated with the former. We have public assurance for it in the pastoral of 1876 by the Bishop of Cambrai. "*Clericalism, Ultramontanism and Jesuitism are one and the same thing—that is to say, Roman Catholicism*—and the distinctions between them have been created by the enemies of religion," says the "Pastoral." "There was a time," adds Monseigneur the Cardinal, "when a certain theological opinion was commonly professed in France concerning the authority of the Pope . . . . It was restricted to our nation, and was of recent origin. The civil power during a century and a half imposed official instruction. Those who professed these opinions were called Gallicans, and those who protested were called Ultramontanes, because they had their doctrinal centre beyond the Alps, at Rome. Today *the distinction between the two schools is no longer admissible.* Theological Gallicanism can no longer exist, since this opinion has ceased to be tolerated by the Church. *It has been solemnly condemned, past all return, by the Œcumenical Council of the Vatican.* ONE CANNOT NOW BE A CATHOLIC WITHOUT BEING ULTRAMONTANE—AND JESUIT."

A plain statement; and as cool as it is plain.

The pastoral made a certain noise in France and in the Catholic world, but was soon forgotten. And as two centuries have rolled away since *an exposé* of the infamous principles of the Jesuits was made (of which we will speak presently), the "Black Militia" of Loyola has had

ample time to lie so successfully in denying the just charges, that even now, when the present Pope has brilliantly sanctioned the utterance of the Bishop of Cambrai, the Roman Catholics will hardly confess to such a thing. Strange exhibition of *infallibility* in the Popes! The "infallible" Pope, Clement XIV (Ganganelli), suppressed the Jesuits on the 23rd of July, 1773, and yet they came to life again; the "infallible" Pope, Pius VII, re-established them on the 7th of August, 1814. The "infallible" Pope, Pius IX, travelled, during the whole of his long Pontificate, between the Scylla and Charybdis of the Jesuit question; his infallibility helping him very little. And now the "infallible" Leo XIII (fatal figures!) raises the Jesuits again to the highest pinnacle of their sinister and graceless glory.

The recent *Brevet* of the Pope (hardly two years old) dated July 13th (the same fatal figure), 1886, is an event, the importance of which can never be overvalued. It begins with the words *Dolemus inter alia,* and reinstalls the Jesuits in all the rights of the Order that had ever been cancelled. It was a *manifesto* and a loud defiant insult to all the Christian nations of the New and the Old worlds. From an article by Louis Lambert in the *Gaulois* (August 18th, 1886) we learn that "In 1750 there were 40,000 Jesuits all over the world. In 1800, *officially* they were reckoned at about 1,000 men, only. In 1886, they numbered between 7 and 8,000." This last modest number can well be doubted. For, verily now—"Where you meet a man believing in the salutary nature of falsehoods, or the divine authority of things doubtful, and fancying that to serve the good cause he must call the devil to his aid, there is a follower of Unsaint Ignatius," says Carlyle, and adds of that black militia of Ignatius that: "They have given a new substantive to modern languages. The word Jesuitism now, in all countries, expresses an idea for which there was in nature no prototype before. Not till these last centuries had the human soul generated that abomination, or needed to name it. Truly they have achieved great things in the world, and a general result that we may call stupendous."

And now since their reinstalment in Germany and elsewhere, they will achieve still grander and more stupendous results. For the future can be best read by the past. Unfortunately in this year of the Pope's jubilee the civilized portions of humanity—even the Protestant ones—seem to have entirely forgotten that past. Let then those who profess to despise Theosophy, the fair child of early Aryan thought and

Alexandrian Neo-Platonism, bow before the monstrous Fiend of the Age, but let them not forget at the same time its history.

It is curious to observe, how persistently the Order has assailed everything like Occultism from the earliest times, and Theosophy since the foundation of its last Society, which is ours. The Moors and the Jews of Spain felt the weight of the oppressive hand of Obscurantism no less than did the Kabalists and Alchemists of the Middle Ages. One would think Esoteric and especially the Occult Arts, or Magic, were an abomination to these good holy fathers? And so indeed they would have the world believe. But when one studies history and the works of their own authors published with the *imprimatur* of the Order, what does one find? That the *Jesuits have practised not only Occultism, but* BLACK MAGIC *in its worst form,*[4] *more than any other body of men; and that to it they owe in large measure their power and influence!*

To refresh the memory of our readers and *all those whom it may concern,* a short summary of the doings and actings of our good friends, may be once more attempted. For those who are inclined to laugh, and deny the subterranean and truly infernal means used by "Ignatius' black militia," we may state facts.

In *"Isis Unveiled"* it was said of this holy Fraternity that—

> "though established only in 1535 to 1540—in 1555 there was already a general outcry raised against them." And now once more—
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> "that crafty, learned, conscienceless, terrible soul of Jesuitism, within the body of Romanism, is slowly but surely possessing itself of the whole prestige and spiritual power that clings to it..... Throughout antiquity, where, in what land, can we find anything like this Order or anything even approaching it?... The cry of an outraged public morality was raised against it from its very birth. Barely fifteen years had elapsed after the bull approving its constitution was promulgated, when its members began to be driven away from one place to the other. Portugal and the Low Countries got rid of them, in 1578; France in 1594; Venice in 1606; Naples in 1622. From St. Petersburg they were expelled in 1815, and from all Russia in 1820."

The writer begs to remark to the readers, that this, which was written in 1875, applies admirably and with still more force in 1888. Also that the statements that follow in quotation marks may be all verified. And

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[4] Mesmerism or HYPNOTISM is a prominent factor in Occultism. It is *magic.* The Jesuits were acquainted with and practised it ages before Mesmer and Charcot.—[ED.]

thirdly, that the principles (*principii*) of the Jesuits that are now brought forward, are extracted from authenticated MSS. or folios printed by various members themselves of this very distinguished body. Therefore, they can be checked and verified in the "British Museum" and Bodleian Library with still more ease than in our works.

> Many are copied from the large Quarto[5] published by the authority of, and verified and collated by, the Commissioners of the French Parliament. The statements therein were collected and presented to the King, in order that, as the "Arrêt du Parlement du 5 Mars, 1762," expresses it, "the elder son of the Church might be made aware of the perversity of this doctrine. . . . A doctrine authorizing Theft, Lying, Perjury, Impurity, every Passion and Crime; teaching Homicide, Parricide, and Regicide, overthrowing religion in order to substitute for it superstition, by favouring *Sorcery,* Blasphemy, Irreligion, and Idolatry . . . etc." Let us then examine the ideas on *magic* of the Jesuits, that magic which they are pleased to call *devilish* and *Satanic* when studied by the Theosophists. Writing on this subject in his secret instructions, Anthony Escobar[6] says:
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> "IT IS LAWFUL . . . TO MAKE USE OF THE SCIENCE ACQUIRED THROUGH THE ASSISTANCE OF THE DEVIL, PROVIDED THE PRESERVATION AND USE OF THAT KNOWLEDGE DO NOT DEPEND UPON THE DEVIL, FOR THE KNOWLEDGE IS GOOD IN ITSELF, AND THE SIN BY WHICH IT WAS ACQUIRED HAS GONE BY."[7]

True: why should not a Jesuit cheat the Devil as well as he cheats every layman?

> "*Astrologers and soothsayers are either bound, or are not bound, to restore the reward of their divination, if the event does not come to pass.* I own," remarks the *good* Father Escobar, "that the former opinion does not at all please me, because, when the astrologer or diviner has exerted all the diligence *in the diabolical art* which is essential to his purpose, he has fulfilled his duty, whatever may be the result. As the physician . . . is not bound to restore his fee . . . if his patient should die; so neither is the astrologer bound to restore his charge . . . except where he has used no effort, or was ignorant of

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[5] Extracts from this "Arrêt" were compiled into a work in 4 vols., 12mo., which appeared at Paris, in 1762, and was known as "Extraits des Assertions, etc." In a work entitled "Response aux Assertions," an attempt was made by the Jesuits to throw discredit upon the facts collected by the Commissioners of the French Parliament in 1762, as for the most part malicious fabrications. "To ascertain the validity of this impeachment," says the author of "The Principles of the Jesuits," "the libraries of the two Universities, of the British Museum and of Sion College have been searched for the authors cited; and in every instance where the volume was found, the correctness of the citation was established."

[6] "Theologiæ Moralis," Tomus iv. Lugduni, 1663.

[7] Tom. iv., lib. xxviii., sect. I, de Præcept I., c. 20, n. 184.

his diabolic art; because, when he has used his endeavours he has not deceived."[8]

Busembaum and Lacroix, in "Theologia Moralis,"[9] say,

"PALMISTRY MAY BE CONSIDERED LAWFUL, IF FROM THE LINES AND DIVISIONS OF THE HANDS IT CAN ASCERTAIN THE DISPOSITION OF THE BODY, AND CONJECTURE, WITH PROBABILITY, THE PROPENSITIES AND AFFECTIONS OF THE SOUL."[10]

This noble fraternity, which many preachers have of late so vehemently denied to have ever been a *secret* one, has been sufficiently proved to be such. Its constitutions were translated into Latin by the Jesuit Polancus, and printed in the college of the Society at Rome, in 1558. "They were jealously kept secret, the greater part of the Jesuits themselves knowing only extracts from them.[11] *They were never produced to light until 1761, when they were published by order of the French Parliament* in 1761, 1762, in the famous process of Father Lavalette." The Jesuits reckon it among the greatest achievements of their Order that Loyola supported, by a special memorial to the Pope, a petition for the reorganization of that abominable and abhorred instrument of wholesale butchery—the infamous tribunal of the Inquisition.

This Order of Jesuits is now all-powerful in Rome. They have been reinstalled in the Congregation of Extraordinary Ecclesiastical Affairs, in the Department of the Secretary of the State, and in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The Pontifical Government was for years previous to Victor Emanuel's occupation of Rome entirely in their hands. . . . —*Isis*, vol. II, p. 355, et seq.

What was the origin of that order? It may be stated in a few words. In the year 1534, on August 16th, an ex-officer and "Knight of the Virgin," from the Biscayan Provinces, and the proprietor of the magnificent castle of *Casa Solar*—Ignatius Loyola,[12] became the hero of the following incident. In the subterranean chapel of the Church of Montmartre, surrounded by a few priests and students of theology, he received their pledges to devote their whole lives to the spreading of Roman Catholicism by every and all means, whether good or foul; and he was thus enabled to establish a new Order. Loyola proposed to his

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[8] Ibid., sect. 2, de Præcept I, Probl. 113, n. 586.

[9] "Theologia Moralis nunc pluribus partibus aucta, à R. P. Claudio Lacroix, Societatis Jesu." Coloniæ, 1757 (Ed. Mus. Brit.).

[10] Tom., ii., lib. iii., Pars. I, Fr. I, c. I. dub. 2 resol. viii. What a pity that the counsel for the defence had not bethought them to cite this orthodox legalization of "cheating by palmistry or otherwise," at the recent religio-scientific prosecution of the medium Slade, in London.

[11] Niccolini: "History of the Jesuits." [12] Or "*St. Inigo* the Biscayan," by his true name.

six chief companions that their Order should be a *militant* one, in order to fight for the interests of the *Holy* seat of Roman Catholicism. Two means were adopted to make the object answer; the education of youth, and proselytism (*apostolat*). This was during the reign of Pope Paul III, who gave his full sympathy to the new scheme. Hence in 1540 was published the famous papal bull—*Regimini militantis Ecclesiæ* (the regiment of the warring, or *militant* Church)—after which the Order began increasing rapidly in numbers and power.

(*To be concluded.*)

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## AUTHORITARIAN ETHICS

The use of the term "authoritarian" makes it necessary to clarify the concept of authority. So much confusion exists with regard to this concept because it is widely believed that we are confronted with the alternative of having dictatorial, irrational authority or of having no authority at all. This alternative, however, is fallacious. The real problem is what *kind* of authority we are to have. When we speak of authority do we mean rational or irrational authority? *Rational authority* has its source in *competence.* The person whose authority is respected functions competently in the task with which he is entrusted by those who conferred it upon him. He need not intimidate them nor arouse their admiration by magic qualities; as long as and to the extent to which he is completely helping, instead of exploiting, his authority is based on rational grounds and does not call for irrational awe. Rational authority not only permits but requires constant scrutiny and criticism of those subjected to it; it is always temporary, its acceptance depending on its performance. The source of *irrational authority,* on the other hand, is always power over people. This power can be physical or mental, it can be realistic or only relative in terms of the anxiety and helplessness of the person submitting to this authority. Power on the one side, fear on the other, are always the buttresses on which irrational authority is built. Criticism of the authority is not only not required but forbidden.

—ERICH FROMM

# THE MAGNETISM OF IDEAS

VIEWING philosophically the progress of modern psychology, it becomes clear that if, as a science, it has passed the stages of infancy and childhood, the bulk of its votaries still wear a heavy armor of materialism. However, there is considerable evidence that it will finally rise to the dignity of its name. That thoughts, feelings, and emotions are capable of producing distinct effects upon the body is now admitted; that fear, hatred and greed, as well as their opposites—courage, love and altruism—possess power to change the polarity of the being, and are either health-giving or disease-producing, is not denied. But the starting-point of all spiritual philosophy, the *fons et origo* of all true psychology, is not yet clearly formulated; that is, the existence in man of a Divine Ego, or Soul, capable of impressing or *inspiring* the personalities it periodically inhabits with ideas and feelings of its own immortal nature. Yet to speak of Man without thought of the Divine Ego in him, or to practice psychology without taking into account the Soul, is, as one writer on the subject has said, like enacting *Hamlet* with Hamlet left out!

Material Science has recorded the fact that all physical bodies are surrounded by currents of etheric or magnetic force, and that this force is measurable in terms of electric or attractive power. Psychology, or Soul Science, needs now to accept this proposition *with respect to ideas.* From a theosophic viewpoint, until it does, it is hardly fitted to diagnose and prescribe for all mental and psychic disease. How account for the fact that ideas, as we say, are contagious? How explain the fact that a system of thought, whether religious or political, when its hour has arrived, spreads with a fiery power and force that nothing by way of opposition or restraint can stop? Whence comes the seemingly magic power of a slogan?

As early as the days of Greek philosophy, the magnetism of ideas was recognized and understood, and the deleterious effects upon the human body of such feelings as anger, fear and despondency were treated from that point of view—for thought and feeling go hand in hand, producing all outer conditions. Anger, it was then known, too, can make a person ill; fear can change an otherwise normal man into an irresponsible wreck; despondency, slowly eating its way into the

fabric of one's inner being, can destroy the very Will to live. But theosophic psychology, learned in the Wisdom of the ages, treats exhaustively of all such subjects, and of the nature and constitution of man.

> Let us premise, first, the body now visible; second, the inner man—not the spirit; and third, the spirit itself.
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> This inner being is, so to say, inextricably entangled in the body, cell for cell and fibre for fibre. He exists in the body somewhat in the way the fibre of the mango fruit exists in the mango.
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> It is generally overlooked, or not believed, that the inner man . . . has to grow up to maturity, just as the body has to mature before its organs fulfill their functions fully . . . In the course of the growth of this ethereal body several things are to be observed . . . One is that sometimes it is seen that this nebulous forming body is violently shaken, or pulled apart, or burst into fragments . . .
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> *This is caused by anger,* and this is why the sages all dwell upon the need of calmness . . . But anger may be absent and yet still another thing happen . . . Envy is not a mere trifle that produces no physical result . . . It not only hinders the further development, but attracts to the student's vicinity thousands of malevolent beings of all classes that precipitate themselves upon him and wake up or bring on every evil passion.
>
> Another effect is produced on this ethereal body by vanity . . . Another hindrance is fear . . . Its effect on the ethereal form is to shrivel it up, or coagulate and contract it . . . Fear is the same thing as frigidity on the earth, and always proceeds by the process of freezing.

The inner, invisible man stands to the physical body as Cause stands to Effect. It is in mind and emotion, in their magnetic affinity with the good and evil forces of invisible nature, that are to be found the causal factors behind most of what men experience by way of health or disease in the body. Who is not familiar with the well-known saying, "Ulcers come not from what you eat, but from what is eating you?"—meaning to imply, evidently, that thought and feeling are far more powerful, in the production of disease, than the thousand and one *external* agents to which we usually attribute our troubles.

The day will undoubtedly come when the ancient thaumaturgist, in his insistence upon "angels" and "demons," will be redeemed, and proved to be more scientific, from the psychological point of view, than the entire body of materialists, who reject *a priori* every unorthodox view not amenable to microscopic test and formulary. For these invisible creatures of the ancients, whether winged or with horns, were

not *outside* powers and beings. They were the feelings and the thoughts that men hold! Every idea that man engenders, according to esoteric philosophy, coalesces instantaneously with an elemental being, and is either a beneficent *angel* or a maleficent *demon,* capable of attracting to his sphere whole hosts of similarly endowed potencies. "Birds of a feather flock together" is an incontrovertible truism in both physical and occult nature. And if man, the chooser of his thoughts, persists in peopling his currents in space with entities that work him harm, then no one but himself can be blamed for his misery.

It is utterly abnormal, at the present stage of evolution, for the attention of men's minds to be centered so fixedly on the physical plane, and for the causes of disease to be sought in material nature alone. Physical evolution, it is true, is a necessary part of the process. The body and its attributes provide a vehicle or tenement for the incarnating Ego's use. But the mid-point of physical evolution has already been reached—and passed. Man is now on the ascending arc of the circle, and having learned something of the laws and forces of his physical being, should direct his attention to non-physical nature, or occultism. When this is done, it will be discovered that all sorrow, suffering and disease are self-generated, that all affliction, whether physical, psychic or mental, has its cause in the ignorance and violation of some natural Law of occultism.

Shakespeare's immortal question, "Who can minister to a mind diseased?" seems not to have yet found its answer. For Psychology, the science of the soul, is of such nature that it requires a different method of approach from that used in Physics. In the treatment of psychic and mental ills, it is not possible, as with treatment of the body, to prescribe patent medicines, or dosages of pills, which can be forced upon the patient whether he wishes it or not. Healing of all kinds, to be effective, requires the willful cooperation of the patient. But especially is this true with respect to the healing of mind. The higher one reaches into the metaphysical departments of man's being, the more sovereign does his status become. The body, it would appear, can sometimes be healed almost against the person's will—but immortal divine man can not. The Spirit in man is its own ruler—not subject to domination by any foreign power whatsoever.

The method adopted by the Founders of the Theosophical Movement is the method of true Psychology. Everything that is given in

theosophical philosophy is for the purpose of arousing the attention of the Divine Ego in man. And what, other than divine ideas, can achieve this purpose? The spiritual soul of man is not dependent upon outside agencies for its health and well-being. The Soul cannot be coerced or cajoled, or forced into lines of action not consonant with the principles of its own divine being. It can, however, be reached by appeal. It can be reached by suggestion and by logic, by ideas of universal content, free of every element of dross or selfishness.

The only real cure for psychism or insanity therefore is the cure that comes from within. The most that any practitioner can do for a mentally unbalanced person is, in the first instance, to view him as a Soul, to help him get hold of himself, and to begin acting from within, from the unselfish base of his nature. And this, it is encouraging to note, some intuitive doctors have achieved—primarily by directing the attention of patients *away from themselves,* from their personal selves, that is, toward the needs of other souls. Work for the good of others is a magical formula for mental health. And think how much more quickly and effectively this could be achieved with the assistance of right ideas!

All high ideas are charged with currents of healing magnetic power. The doctrine of reincarnation, for example, correlated as it is with every other tenet of esoteric philosophy, is a powerful, uplifting force to the aspiring person. Karma, the law of divine justice, frees the mind of many misconceptions and harmonizes both psychic and mental planes of being. But the noblest idea of all, the highest conception perhaps a man can possibly entertain, is the divine ideal of Mahatmas, or Great Souls who, having won the right to nirvanic bliss, choose to remain on Earth for the purpose of helping on the salvation of all that lives.

> The whole sweep, meaning, and possibility of evolution are contained in the word *Mahatma. Maha* is "great," and *Atma* is "soul," and both compounded into one mean those great souls who have triumphed before us not because they are made of different stuff and are of some strange family, but just because they are of the human race. Reincarnation, karma, the sevenfold division, retribution, reward, struggle, failure, success, illumination, power, and a vast embracing love for man, all these lie in that single word. The soul emerges from the unknown, begins to work in and with matter, is reborn again and again, makes karma, develops the six vehicles for itself, meets retribution for sin and punishment for mistake, grows strong

> by suffering, succeeds in bursting through the gloom, is enlightened by true illumination, grasps power, retains charity, expands with love for orphaned humanity, and thenceforth helps all others who remain in darkness until all may be raised up to the place with the "Father in Heaven" who is the Higher Self.

The psychological power of this mental conception, ensouling feeling and the moral power of Altruism that it engenders, can hardly be overestimated. It was for this reason, no doubt—that is, for its magnetic and psychological value—that both H. P. Blavatsky and Wm. Q. Judge declared at the outset the existence of holy Men. Wherever faith in Masters is strong, says Wm. Q. Judge, wherever members of a Lodge are not afraid to declare their belief in these holy Beings—there the work of the Theosophical Movement goes forward. Held in mind, with reverence, by a spiritually inclined man, the magnetism of this idea will attract to one's sphere beneficent influences from the inner spiritual planes of being. Thought over, without reviling, by an averagely unselfish person, it will provide a protective armour against evil, and will open the individual's nature to higher and nobler themes. But meditated upon in confidence and trust by a person devoted to the service of his fellows, the ideal of Mahatmas may become a perpetual source of help, comfort and inspiration. The magnetism of this idea can become a healing power for any trial of affliction in the mind or heart of man.

> Half, if not two-thirds of our ailings and diseases are the fruit of our imagination and fears. Destroy the latter and give another bent to the former, and nature will do the rest.

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It is impossible to calculate the moral mischief, if I may so express it, that mental lying has produced in society. When a man has so far corrupted and prostituted the chastity of his mind, as to subscribe his professional belief to things he does not believe, he has prepared himself for the commission of every other crime.

Let a man throw aside that narrowness of soul, that selfishness of principle, which the niggards of all professions are so unwilling to part with, and he will be at once delivered of his fears on that head. Suspicion is the companion of mean souls, and the bane of all good society.

—THOMAS PAINE

# THE MYSTERY OF INDIVIDUALITY

## III: Is "I-am-ness" Immortal?

WHEN we pass to such questions as whether individuality has a beginning, and therefore an ending, and whether there are self-conscious beings actively present at the commencement of an earth or solar system, we are brought face to face with profound philosophical problems that penetrate to the heart of the universe and of man. And we border on mysteries, the ultimate solution of which will be man's only at the moment of highest spiritual evolution.

The concept of immortality held by some students of Theosophy would lead one to believe that the soul has existed eternally in the past, and will exist eternally in the future, *as an individualized entity.* Also, that such self-conscious beings assumed an active, conscious part in the production of our solar system. Perhaps these ideas have naturally arisen owing to an acquaintance with the oft-repeated truism that immortality implies the existence of a soul which has never been created, and therefore must be without beginning or ending. But where in the teachings can be found the statement that the soul *uninterruptedly* exists as an individualized unit, a separate I-am-I consciousness, independent of all the rest?

It becomes necessary, therefore, to scrutinize carefully all available statements as to the source of egoity in man, what actually constitutes individuality, and what may be its limitations as well as ultimate destiny.

Far from regarding man's individuality as a continuous reality, H. P. Blavatsky indicates that man's higher principles are "individualized and separated only on the spheres of Illusion by a differentiation as illusive as the rest." (*S.D.* I, 275.) In the *Transactions of the Blavatsky Lodge,* a most interesting reference is to be found:

> . . . all labour more or less under illusions, and chiefly under the great illusion (Maya) that they are, as personalities, distinct beings from other beings, and that even their *Selves* or Egos will prevail in the eternity (or sempiternity) as such; whereas not only we ourselves, but the whole visible and invisible universe, are only a temporary part of the one beginningless and endless WHOLE, or that which ever was, is, and will be. (p. 32.)

It is in this WHOLE that we are apparently to seek for our *uninterrupted* immortality. Elsewhere she states that "the spark will re-become the Flame." ( *S.D.* I, 265.) The flame is in itself Unity. "The rays from this flame will be complex, each acting in its own straight line." (*Trans.*, p. 26.)

And what, then, of self-consciousness, that wondrous power that makes man man? Does that too have beginnings and endings? "... there are no finite differentiated minds during Pralaya," states the same Teacher. "Everything outside of the Absolute and immutable Sat (Be-ness), is necessarily finite and conditioned, since it has beginning and end." (*Trans.*, p. 19.)

*The Secret Doctrine* definitely states, however, that "the *Monad* of every living being ... *is an individual Dhyan Chohan, distinct from others, a kind of spiritual individuality of its own,* during one special Manvantara." (I, 265.) And in one of her articles, H.P.B. suggests that each Ego has a body which is "immortal, throughout the manvantara unless Nirvana puts an end to it before." (THEOSOPHY 3: 16.) It is pertinent to ask, however: When does the Manvantara commence, for the active self-conscious Ego? This is a most important point to ascertain, inasmuch as the impression is sometimes gathered by students that our universe came into existence through an act or series of acts of great, perfected self-conscious men! Certainly, at the beginning of our universe, all beings were present who were to be concerned in that evolutionary period, but how were they present, and in what condition? To quote again from the *Transactions,* where H.P.B. describes the nature of the highest hierarchies of being, the Ah-hi or Dhyan Chohans:

> Like all other Hierarchies, on the highest plane they are *arupa, i.e.,* formless, bodiless, without any substance, mere breaths. On the second plane, they first approach to Rupa, or form. On the third, they become Manasa-putras [Sons of Mind], those who become incarnated in man. With every plane they reach they are called by different names. The Ah-hi of this Manvantara exist no longer; they have long ago become Planetary, Solar, Lunar, and lastly, incarnating Egos, for, as said, "they are the collective hosts of spiritual beings."
>
> A man can choose what he will think about; can the analogy be applied to the Ah-hi?
>
> No; because a man has free will and the Ah-hi have none. They are obliged to act simultaneously, for the law under which they must act gives them the impulse. Free will can only exist in a Man who

> has both mind and consciousness, which act and make him perceive things both within and without himself. The "Ah-hi" are Forces, not human Beings.
>
> But are they not conscious agents in the work?
>
> Conscious in as far as they act within the universal consciousness. But the consciousness of the Manasa-putra on the third plane is quite different. It is only then that they become *Thinkers.* (pp. 23-5.)

In the sense of a self-conscious spiritual being, the teaching seems to be that there never was any man on this planetary chain, or in this round, or on this globe, until 18 million years ago. Hundreds upon hundreds of millions of years have elapsed, but so far as the seven classes of Monads under the sway of Karmic Law are concerned, intellectual evolution did not begin until eighteen million years ago. Then there was no differentiation into individual egos. The teaching in *The Key to Theosophy* that "every human being is the bearer, or *Vehicle,* of an *Ego* coeval with every other Ego; because all *Egos* are *of the same essence* and belong to the primeval emanation from one universal infinite *Ego*" (p. 110), appears to refer to this very period prior to separation. In *The Secret Doctrine,* H.P.B. quotes from a Master's letter in which reference was made to certain classes of Dhyan Chohans who "are too far progressed and spiritualized to be thrown back forcibly from Dhyan-Chohanship into the vortex of a new primordial evolution through the lower Kingdoms."

> ". . . Then they *become an active force* and commingle with the Elementals, to *develop little by little the full type of humanity.*" That is to say, to develop in, and endow man with his Self-conscious mind, or *Manas.* (*S.D.* II, 233 fn.)

The feeling of egoity dates from this period, it would appear, but even then was not firmly established, for we are informed that "individual *Manasa-putras* are the direct radiations of the divine Ideation —'individual' in the sense of later differentiation, owing to numberless incarnations." (*Trans.,* p. 65.) "The sense of 'being'," states Robert Crosbie, "comes from perceptive power in action; as the range of perception and reflection increases, the *realization of 'being' becomes stronger.*" (*Answers to Questions,* p. 20.)

A sense of individuality commences on the plane of mind. On the plane of Atma or Buddhi such feeling is impossible:

> Buddhi in man is the vehicle of Atman, which vehicle is of the essence of the highest plane of Akasa and therefore does not differentiate. (*Trans.,* p. 28.)

> There is no potentiality for creation, or self-Consciousness, in a *pure* Spirit on this our plane, unless its too homogeneous, perfect, because divine, nature is, so to say, mixed with, and strengthened by, an essence already differentiated. It is only the lower line of the Triangle [Manas or Mind] . . . that can furnish this needed consciousness on the plane of differentiated Nature. (*S.D.* II, 80.)
>
> Apart from Cosmic Substance, Cosmic Ideation could not manifest as individual consciousness, since it is only through a vehicle of matter that consciousness wells up as "I am I," a physical basis being necessary to focus a ray of the Universal Mind at a certain stage of complexity. (*S.D.* I, 15.)

Intellectual evolution was not possible before the incarnation for another excellent reason. Until then there was no contrast. The moment we incarnate, there is the contrast between the spirit and matter in us. The purely spiritual man is not intellectual; his consciousness is said to be universal. He had to incarnate to progress intellectually. The activity of Manas depends on contrast. It becomes inactive when there is no material to work on. Thus when we are in the various sleep or after death states, we are not self-conscious. And during Pralaya, where is Manas? Non-existent. Manas is absorbed in Buddhi at the close of each life, Buddhi-Manas is absorbed in Atman at the close of each Manvantara. But they do not cease to *be.*

Every night of our lives we go into a comparable condition, yet re-emerge in all our integrity the following day. So, it is said that "the thread of radiance which is imperishable and dissolves only in Nirvana, re-emerges from it in its integrity on the day when the Great Law calls all things back into action." (*S.D.* II, 80.)

> Nor is the individuality—*nor even the essence of the personality,* if any be left behind—lost, because re-absorbed. For, however limitless—from a human standpoint—the paranirvanic state, it has yet a limit in Eternity. Once reached, the same monad will *re-emerge* therefrom, as a still higher being, on a far higher plane, to recommence its cycle of perfected activity. (*S.D.* I, 266.)
>
> At the "Day be with us" every Ego has to remember all the cycles of his past reincarnations *for Manvantaras.* . . . It sees the stream of its past incarnations by a certain divine light. It sees all humanity at once, but still there is ever, as it were, a stream which is always the "I".—H.P.B. (From *The Friendly Philosopher,* p. 98.)

# YOUTH-COMPANIONS ASK— AND ANSWER

*IN what aspects are the teachings of anarchism compatible with Theosophic principles?*

In their most ideal forms, and under the proper conditions, all social concepts would be compatible with theosophic principles. One of these conditions—especially in relation to anarchism—would obviously consist in sufficient maturity and sense of individual responsibility on the part of the individuals in the society. Another would concern the nature of the lessons particularly needed at that time by the people involved. A devotional book says, "He who does not fulfill his appointed task in life has lived in vain." The converse is also true: he who fulfills his duty most completely lives to the greatest benefit of his fellow beings. Thus, in a society where all are conscientiously and honestly seeking to do their whole duty, the members will eventually be freed from all forms of external coercion, while the opportunities to make the fruit of the experience of each available to all will be great indeed. [The "Communitarians" of France, noted in Lookout for November, 1953, regarded even the "sins" and "crimes" of their fellows as a gift to the community—since opportunity is thus afforded for everyone to learn from these mistakes.]

In an ideal "anarchistic" society, full advantage could be made of the workings of Karmic law unobscured by man-made laws—which must necessarily be limited and short-sighted. Such a social structure —or rather deliberate lack of an imposed structure—could be the vehicle of beings far advanced in the practice of brotherhood. Then, too, regardless of prevailing external forms of society, a man's internal relations to the cosmos are inevitably "anarchistic" in the sense that the evolution of each is self-induced and self-devised, and, because, from the viewpoint of Karma, no external forms, however restricting, can ultimately determine the quality of moral choices.

*Is the Theosophic philosophy necessarily "non-violent" in its practical application?*

(*a*) At first glance a student of Theosophy might respond—depending of course upon his cultural background: "Heavens, no, Theosophy

is not necessarily non-violent in application or necessarily anything else in application! There is an important distinction to be remembered which sets 'practical theosophy' apart from religions and creeds. In Theosophy it is claimed that each individual, at the very least, is potentially capable of directing his practical life in the noblest, most altruistic of all ways. Western religions, on the other hand, express less confidence in the basic, spiritual nature of man."

Undoubtedly there is much validity to this position. There is also quite a bit of circumstantial evidence to support it, since more than a few great theosophists have apparently supported wars. We must become more analytical, though, about the significance and possible ambiguity of the term "non-violence." Two possible definitions of non-violence are: (1) that it stands for a certain kind of physical restraint; or, (2) that its major significance has to do with a non-hostile attitude of mind. These explanations, obviously, are closely connected, and it could be argued theoretically that it is impossible for a person to be consistent and apply only one of these points of view. Conversely, it could be argued that human beings—because they are "human"—are not entirely consistent, and that physical restraint might be practiced for reasons of expediency alone.

(*b*) *Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary* defines *violent* as: "1. Moving, acting, or characterized by physical force, especially by extreme and sudden or by unjust or improper force; furious; as, a violent assault. 2. Produced or effected by force; not spontaneous or natural." Since, by definition, a "violent" act would involve "unjust or improper force," it would go against the attitude of trying to live in a mental atmosphere of harmony with the laws of nature and man's higher Self. Here we return to the attitude of mind involved in an act. There are just so many "acts" that can be used for carrying out a thought, but many varying attitudes of mind and combinations of motives may be behind a common action. Since it is essentially the motive that counts, the thing that would be "un-Theosophical" would be the "unjust or improper force" part. An act or thought that is unjust does not involve the higher nature of man, while the higher nature must be involved in every practical application of the Theosophic philosophy. The lower nature of man, if acting unchecked or unguided by the "real within," thus allowing expression of "unjust or improper force," is not on the evolutionary path toward full Self-consciousness.

*It is well known that Gandhi and many Indians have refused to destroy any form of animal life. This seems impractical because of insects, diseased rodents, etc. Is there any important truth in this position and, if so, how can one make use of it?*

(*a*) As with so many familiar "counsels of perfection," the idea of refusing to take any form of life seems too extreme and, in this day and age, impossible. For people to imitate Gandhi or the Jains, moreover —taking such convictions as if truly their own—often means to confuse both themselves and those who observe them. Convictions need to be fought for and won; borrowed, they are not beneficial to the evolution of the soul, and are little more than wasted motion. An idea may appeal to our sense of what is right, but unless arrived at by individual understanding, it is empty and does not stir us very deeply. Ways of thinking which are accepted without due consideration are easily exchanged for more popular beliefs, as the "climate of opinion" of one's environment changes. If all of one's decisions and modes of conduct are based on such shaky and shallow-rooted "principles," one is following the line of least resistance and, consequently, is not fighting the battle of an Arjuna. The ease with which we find ourselves accepting the conclusions of others, whether it be older students or H.P.B., is something that must be watched; similarly, people who love Gandhi should not be primarily concerned with imitating him.

Two other thoughts come to mind. There seems to me to be a decided trend to rationalize oneself out of following through on principle. This is partly due, I suppose, to the general lack of conviction concerning any life beyond the present existence. But it could also be partly due to a lack of ennobling religion that man finds little dignity in his being. Perhaps one way in which the atmosphere of the Indians is better than ours (the West) is that man is there considered to be in control of his own destiny; he will reward and punish himself. If a man is willing to go to extremes for the sake of a principle, he must have, among other things, a great deal of faith in himself—or rather in the Self. Therefore, one who has enough conviction to follow through on a program of complete harmlessness has faith in his own integrity, at least, and must learn quite a lot from the discipline involved. The other thought that comes to mind is the careless regard that most of us have for life, whether human or other, which clearly needs correction. It can be argued that we, here in the West, hold

higher regard for life than the people of the East; but this is always our *own* life we regard so highly. Our methods of social punishment are far from being ideal expressions of regard for others' lives. We neither regard man as an animal, completely, nor as a potential god, so we are in a state of confusion; neither society nor religion is consistent on the matter of the nature of life, and how it should be regarded. The repulsion that existed in the first world war for the mass slaughter that seemed to everyone a display of man's regression, no longer exists so strongly—since we have become so accustomed to killing. Man has become a means to an end.

There have been wars well worth fighting, as some of our great men have shown, but they were never fought with such little regard for the dignity of life as is often practiced today, both in war and peace. The thoughtless taking of *anything* is an error. Everything has its place; and if we blunder in and change things with little understanding, the order of life is just that much more confused. The art of restraint is perhaps well to develop in this instance, for, although we are self-conscious beings, we do not have the insight to know where we, as men, are correct and where nature has erred. The thing to remember is that this is a universe of mind; even though we are not always consciously living from this basis, action is set in motion on that level and must ultimately be dealt with there.

(*b*) There are probably many ways to approach this question. But often the so-called "non-violent" approach can be strained to a pitiable extreme! In this case, it is only reasonable to be concerned about the welfare of others. The question of whether a soldier is justified in killing may present itself in an issue of this sort. It would appear that the *purpose* or motive is, as always, to be considered. What would be right in one case, may often be wrong in another.

It is a most enlightening thing to study a short story, presented in Theosophy School *Teacher's Manual* (p. 185) in which a group of boys suddenly encounters a rattlesnake. The incident, especially the outcome, serves as an excellent illustration of differences of opinion on this sort of question. Much can be said on both sides of the fence. However, as to conclusions, the wise student would not demand a ready-made prescription to be stored away for future use, but rather, an ever-striving and an ever-reaching to larger spheres where thinking and acting for the All will be his ideal.

# WORD PUZZLES

USE of the term *evolution* has gone through many interesting stages. Following the advent of Darwin, this word served as a rallying cry for all those of anti-theological bent who believed that man could be explained without reference to God. The early Darwinists, moreover, saw the evolution of the human species through natural selection as a sort of glorious saga, affording man a nobler role in the drama of earth experience than that assigned to him by theologians. Darwinian man was a man who, so to speak, had pulled himself up by his own boot-straps, and could look with both pride and awe upon the dynamics of his creative capacity.

This was the first stage of modern usage for evolution, a reaction against the estimate of man's estate provided by western religion. Nature was no longer rent asunder, but seen as one, and "the pantheistic attitude" to some extent at least, encouraged. So anxious, however, were the "evolutionists" to advance the faith that man was a noble animal, rather than a tarnished creation of God, that the idea of an indwelling soul found no sanctuary among men of the new persuasion. The evolutionists, in other words, were so anxious to get rid of both God and Theology that every metaphysical question was tossed aside and, actually, with a poor show of logic. This was, however, simply the unfortunate result of a factional approach to evolution and did not signify that scientists really felt a spontaneous preference for uncompromising materialism. Thus, in *The Secret Doctrine* (II, 653), H. P. Blavatsky dealt with questions which she knew would soon be asked again, as soon as factionalism on the part of evolutionists had subsided:

> It would be interesting to obtain a glimpse of the mental representation of *Evolution* in the Scientific brain. . . . What *is* EVOLUTION? If asked to define the full and *complete* meaning of the term, neither Huxley nor Hæckel will be able to do it any better than Webster does: "the act of unfolding; the process of growth, development; as the evolution of a flower from a bud, or an animal from the egg." Yet the bud must be traced through its parent-plant to the seed, and the egg to the animal or bird that laid it; or at any rate to the speck of protoplasm from which it expanded and grew. And both the *seed* and the *speck* must have the latent potentialities in them for the

> reproduction and gradual development, the unfolding of the thousand and one forms or phases of evolution, through which they must pass before the flower or the animal are fully developed? Hence, the future plan, if not a DESIGN, *must be there.* Moreover, that *seed has to be traced,* and its nature ascertained. Have the Darwinists been successful in this?
>
> Here Science is once more silent. But since there is no self-consciousness as yet in either speck, seed, or germ, according to both Materialists and Psychologists of the modern school—Occultists agreeing in this for once with their natural enemies—what is it that guides the force or forces so unerringly in this process of evolution? *Blind* force?

But the evolutionists were honest men, according to their lights. Following the logic of physicalism to its bitter end, they soon perceived that they would have to forego the pleasure of regarding *evolution* as a *purposeful* enterprise. The word *evolution* implied progress and, as scientists, the biologists and anthropologists admitted that they had no right to speak in teleological terms—by suggesting that the process of natural selection implied progress. So the second and third generations of "evolutionists" decided to abandon the word. They could, they decided, speak objectively only of "mutations," not of the *progressive* development of species and organisms. They were willing, in other words, to follow a "truth" wherever it led them—even if by so doing they were forced to give up any lingering personal preferences for a glimpse of transcendent meaning and purpose. Thus we find that the recent birth of a concept of *psychological* evolution, under scientific auspices, also carries the impact of integrity.

Enthusiasts of social improvement and political reformers earlier passed through a similar cycle, at least insofar as disillusionment with a purely environmental approach is concerned. The great faith in social revolution began to grow as soon as theological faith lost dominance, and the eighteenth century became a time for skyrocketing optimism; man was to build his "heavenly city" here, on earth, and his clear duty to "progress" lay in working for drastic change. Here, as with Darwinism, new doctrines were supported by the intuitions of the masses, for it is *natural* for man to believe in a forward march of events, a progression towards improved conditions. But again, as happened a hundred years later in the realm of biological science, political theory too eagerly sought Environment as the cause of human alteration. Progress was conceived almost entirely in those material terms politics

could manage, and, since the doctrine that environment determines the man is a false one, few eighteenth-century dreams of happiness came true. (Cf. Marx's "scientific" dialectic, and the tortured history of "Communism.") Between the influence of Darwin and that of Marx, the greater portion of the intellectual world gravitated towards belief that true progress must of necessity be collective, from which it was but a short step to believing also that technological advance automatically meant the advance of man's stature. Dwight Macdonald, in his analysis of Marxism in *The Root is Man,* aptly describes this psychology, while he also points out how much of "materialism" has been accepted by the average non-Marxist under the guise of "progressivism":

> By "Progressive" is understood those who see the Present as an episode on the road to a better Future; those who think more in terms of historical process than of moral values; those who believe that the main trouble with the world is partly lack of scientific knowledge and partly the failure to apply to human affairs such knowledge as we do have.
>
> The Progressive makes History the center of his ideology. The Radical puts Man there. The Radical is more sensitive to the dual nature of man; he sees evil as well as good at the base of human nature; he is sceptical about the ability of science to explain things beyond a certain point; he is aware of the tragic element in man's fate not only today but in any conceivable kind of society. The Progressive thinks in collective terms (the interests of Society or the Working-class); the Radical stresses the individual conscience and sensibility. The Progressive starts off from what actually is happening; the Radical starts off from what he wants to happen. The former must have the feeling that History is "on his side." The latter goes along the road pointed out by his own individual conscience; if History is going his way, too, he is pleased; but he is quite stubborn about following "what ought to be" rather than "what is."

These concepts, after many disillusioning years, are now being questioned both by astute critics like Macdonald and by a number of psychiatrists. Faith in "progress" and "evolution" must, it is clear, find new births, and at a level reflecting greater knowledge of the nature of man. Hence the "new" concept of "psychological maturity." A good example of the permeation of this viewpoint is furnished by psychologist-philosopher Harry Overstreet, particularly in his volume, *The Mature Mind.* There Overstreet writes that "there is no time and place in which the

adult is exempt from the obligation to practice maturity nor without the power to enjoy maturity. If he responds to a situation with a mind open to learn what needs to be learned, he practices—and enjoys—maturity. If he is ready to act responsibly where responsibility is called for; if he sinks his ego out of sight; if he seeks self-understanding and a wise understanding of others; if he tries to see in whole instead of in part, he practices—and enjoys—maturity. Maturity, we now know, need be no dull routine of a defeated and resigned adulthood. It can rather be the triumphant use of powers that all through our childhood and youth have been in preparation. Where there is no vision, we are told, the people perish. Where there is no maturity there is no vision. We now begin to know this. We realize that the evils of our life come not from deep evil within us but from ungrown-up responses to life. Our obligation, then, is to grow up. This is what our time requires of us. This is what may yet be the saving of us."

In this passage, we see an emergence of the theosophic view—that true *evolution* is a series of inner awakenings, with biological changes in species and environmental alterations of behavior serving simply as stage-setting. Overstreet is one of many who now believe that the concept of psychological evolution "provides a new approach to our human selves." Developing this point of view, he says further:

> The essential thing about an individual, we are being brought to realize, is not so much the number of years he has lived as the psychological competence that those years have netted him. Thus we are given a new way to estimate ourselves and others. *Not all adults are adult.* Many who look grown-up on the outside may be childish on the inside. Others who look childish on the outside may be surprisingly mature on the inside. Psychological age, moreover, as distinct from chronological, is not merely an academic curiosity. Whether a person is average, advanced, or retarded in his mental, emotional, and social growth may be the concealed reason—and the chief reason—why his adult relationships with his world are as they are.
>
> That we have by no means fully learned the significance of this insight is indicated by the fact that, except in the case of imbeciles and morons, we still admit people to all the major prerogatives of life on a purely chronological basis.
>
> The concept of psychological age has only begun to enter our common consciousness. We are generally familiar with its application to children, but we are only beginning to be alert to behavior symptoms in grown men and women that should warn us of their psychological

> immaturity. Also, we are only now beginning to ask how psychological immaturity can be overcome. We are only beginning, but this new psychological way of regarding ourselves and our human fellows is definitely on the books. When it is also definitely and clearly in our consciousness, we may be set for such a new appraisal of human behavior as will preface a new society.

Though vague in terminology, such statements can easily be regarded as "reincarnations" of theosophic ideas. This trend is presently to be noted, not only in the works of outstanding psychiatrists and psychoanalysts, but also in Dr. Gray Walter's *The Living Brain* and in Julian Huxley's latest writings. The search for the essence of man's nature, long pursued through the arid deserts of materialism, is being redirected. What has been gained is the determination to proceed slowly and carefully in speaking of the soul of man, and the value that this honest caution reveals is especially evident, now that it is oftener admitted that there *is* a soul in need of understanding.

Evolution is, truly, a noble word. No other term in the English language so well symbolizes the "ladder of being" described in the Third Fundamental Proposition of *The Secret Doctrine*. That something of its esoteric meaning is presently dawning is a hopeful sign of "progress" for the Theosophical Movement.

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How will there still be one particular soul which is yours, one which is the soul of this particular man, and one which is another's? Are they the souls of particular individuals in the lower order, but belong in the higher order to that higher unity? But this will mean that Socrates will exist as long as Socrates' soul is in the body; but he will cease to be precisely when he attains to the very best. Now no real being ever ceases to be. The intellects There do not cease to be because they are not corporeally divided, but each remains distinct in otherness, having the same essential being.

—PLOTINUS

# THE ELEMENTS OF PRAYER

The syllable OM is the leader of all prayers; let it therefore be employed in the beginning of all prayers. —*Padma Purana*

PRAYER is the longing, the inclining, or the aspiring toward that which represents the *summum bonum,* the highest good. Seen through the eyes of the suppliant, that highest good may signify the fruits of righteous lives and the earned wages of eternity—or it may fulfill but the expediency of the moment. It may inhere in the resounding chant of the liturgy; in human sacrifice; in the sacrifice of oneself; in the meditated silence of the soul; or in the culmination of loss and anguish. Prayer may be directed to gods or to demons. Prayer is that which man chooses to make of it, each to his own measure. Yet to each it represents the most sacred and high good. But the true prayer is said to take place within one's closet, and is like unto the sound of a bell terminating within the bell.

True prayer opens the spiritual sight of man, for prayer is desire, and desire develops WILL. There are many other meanings to prayer besides that given it in the West. It means not only a pleading or petition, but in days of old meant far more an invocation or incantation. The prayer as outward petition to an unknown God as the addressee, was inaugurated by the Jews and popularized by the Pharisees. Will-prayer is rather an internal command than a petition. It is an occult process, a mystery, by which finite and conditioned thoughts and desires, unable to be assimilated by the absolute spirit which is unconditioned, are translated into spiritual wills and the will. Such process is called "spiritual transmutation." *Will-power* becomes a living power. The intensity of our ardent aspirations changes prayer into the "philosopher's stone," or that which transmutes lead into pure gold.

It is blasphemy to teach that an Omniscient and Omnipotent God needs uttered prayers to know what he has to do! Similarly, it is regarded as idolatry to pray to *created* finite beings—*i.e.,* gods, saints, angels. One should therefore try to replace fruitless and useless prayer by meritorious and good-producing actions. Buddha says, "Seek nought from the helpless gods—pray not! But rather act, for darkness will not brighten. Ask nought from the silence, for it can neither speak nor hear." We believe neither in vicarious atonement nor in the possi-

NOTE.—Collated mostly from Theosophical sources.

bility for the remission of the smallest sin by any god, not even by a "*personal* Absolute" or "Infinite."

That which supports the faith of man in God and a spiritual life to come is *Intuition,* the divine outcome of our inner self. "There is a faculty of the human mind," wrote Iamblichus, "which is superior to all which is born or begotten. Through it we are enabled to attain *union with the superior intelligences,* to being transported beyond the scenes of this world, and to partaking the higher life and peculiar powers of the heavenly ones." This is the faculty called Intuition. The mind, the sentient soul, called *fav-atma,* is inseparable from the physical brain, which it holds in subjection, and is in its turn equally trammeled by it. While it is yet *within* the material body, the clearness and correctness of its spiritual visions depend on its more or less intimate relation with its higher principle—Intuition. When this relation is such as to allow the most ethereal portions of this soul-essence to act independently of its grosser particles and of the brain, it can unerringly comprehend what it sees. Then only is it the pure, rational, *super-sentient* soul. This state is known in India as the *Samadhi.* It is the highest condition of spirituality possible to man on earth.

There is another, dark, side of prayer. A prayer may be an appeal or an incantation for malediction, and a curse (as in the case of two armies praying simultaneously for mutual destruction) as much as for blessing. Sorcery and incantations are regarded as fables now; yet from the day of the *Institutes of Justinian* down to the laws against witchcraft of England and America, such incantations, even when only suspected, were punished as criminal. A classic *historical* example of this aspect of "prayer" is related of the pagan Greeks who, upon the approach of the fleet of Xerxes, were advised by the oracle of Delphi to "sacrifice to the winds." The Athenians are accused of having sacrificed thus to Boreas; and this "Demon" is charged with having submerged and wrecked 400 ships of the Persian fleet on the rocks of Mount Pelion, and of having become so furious "that all the Magi of Xerxes could hardly counteract it by offering contra-sacrifices to Tethys" (*Herodotus*). "Very fortunately," comments H. P. Blavatsky, "no authenticated instance is on the records of Christian wars showing a like catastrophe on the same scale happening to one Christian 'fleet' owing to the prayers of its enemy—another Christian nation. But this from no fault of theirs, for each prays as ardently to Jehovah for the

destruction of the other, as the Athenians prayed to Boreas. Both resorted to a neat little piece of black magic *con amore.*"

Every such "sacrifice" or prayer to God for help is *no better than an act of black magic.* It was not superstition in the Greeks, if the same has to be regarded as *Divine* Worship in the Israelites, who sacrificed as often to wind and fire—especially to the latter element. Do they not say that their "God is a consuming fire"? And did not Elijah seek for him (the Lord) in the "great strong wind, and in the earthquake"? Do not the Christians repeat the same after them? Do not they, moreover, sacrifice to this day to the same *God of Wind and Water?* They do; because special prayers for rain, dry weather, trade winds and the calming of storms on the seas exist to this hour in certain prayer-books. These are relics of pagan sacrifices to the gods of the elements. The magic of the ancient priests of Atlantis consisted, in that far day, in addressing *their gods in their own language.* These were the Cosmic gods in their phenomenal manifestation of the four elements. "The speech of men cannot reach the Lords. Each must be addressed in the language of his respective element." An ancient book adds as an explanation of the nature of that *Element*-language: "It is composed of *sounds,* not words; of sounds, numbers and figures. He who knows how to blend the three, will call forth the response of the superintending Power" (the regent-god of the specific element needed).

The latter science or element-language has survived in the mantras found in the Vedic works, used as incantations and charms, anciently, and today by those "adepts who have the power to translate a strictly regular mantram, from the Sanskrit, into any form of language." A mantram is a collection of words which, when sounded in speech, induces certain vibrations not only in the air, but also in the finer ether, thereby producing certain effects. The indispensable agent of every such *magical* performance, religious or profane, is the Akasa. In the sacrificial mysteries of the Vedas, Akasa is the all-directing and omnipotent Deva (god) who plays the part of superintendent over the magical effects of the religious performance, and had its own appointed priest in days of old, who took its name. These mantrams, or "prayers," of *white magic* are hidden in the ancient Sanskrit and in the language which preceded it. Their use is known to none but the Initiates.

To disbelieve that there exist in man certain arcane powers which, by psychological study he can develop in himself to the highest degree,

that he becomes an hierophant (adept-scientist), and then imparts to others under the same conditions of earthly discipline, is to cast an imputation of falsehood upon a number of the best, purest, and most learned men of antiquity and the middle ages. "The Will," says Van Helmont, "is the first of all powers. . . . The will is the property of all spiritual beings, and displays itself in them the more actively, the more they are freed from matter." Paracelsus teaches that "determined will is the beginning of all magical operations. It is because men do not perfectly *imagine* and believe the result, that the [occult] arts are so uncertain, while they might be perfectly certain." Reason, the outgrowth of the physical brain, develops at the expense of instinct—the flickering reminiscence of a once divine omniscience—spirit. In losing instinct, man loses his intuitive powers, which are the crown and ultimatum of instinct. Reason is the clumsy weapon of the scientist—intuition the unerring guide of the seer. We believe in "communion" and simultaneous action in unison with our "Father in secret"; and in rare moments of ecstatic bliss, in the mingling of our higher soul with the universal essence, attracted as it is towards its origin and center. Whether in the "inner temple," or through the study of Theurgy carried on privately, or by the sole exertion of a whole life of spiritual labor, men of old obtained the practical proof of such divine possibilities for man fighting his battle with life on earth to win a life in the eternity!

But are such "practical proofs of divine possibilities" to be found among the men of today? The great majority of people are intensely selfish, and pray only for themselves, asking to be *given* their "daily bread" instead of working for it, and begging God not to lead them "into temptation" but to deliver them from evil. The result is that prayer as now understood is doubly pernicious: (*a*) It kills in man self-reliance; (*b*) It develops in him a still more ferocious selfishness and egotism than he is already endowed with by nature. And the plain truth is stated to be that they are "unwise who believe that Karma-Nemesis may be propitiated by whatever sacrifice or prayers, or have her wheel diverted from the path it has once taken." Further: "Woe unto those Occultists and Theosophists who, instead of crushing out the desires of the lower personal *ego* or physical man, and saying, addressing their *Higher* Spiritual Ego immersed in Atma-Buddhic light, 'Thy will be done, not mine,' etc., send up waves of will-power for selfish

or unholy purposes! For this is black magic, abomination, and spiritual sorcery." Karma is, in the strictest sense, "no respecter of persons," and can neither be propitiated, nor turned aside by prayers. An occultist or a philosopher will not speak of the goodness or cruelty of Providence; but, identifying it with Karma-Nemesis, he will teach that nevertheless it guards the good and watches over them in this, as in future lives; and that it punishes evil-doers—aye, even to the seventh rebirth. So long, in short, as the effect of his having thrown into perturbation even the smallest atom in the Infinite World of Harmony has not been finally adjusted.

Plotinus recommended solitude for prayer, as the most efficient means of obtaining what is asked. He elaborated the entire theosophy and theurgy of his predecessors into a complete system, and believed with Iamblichus in the attaining of a divine power, which, overcoming the mundane life, rendered the individual an organ of the Deity. The ancient and medieval mystics divided *magic* into three classes—Theurgia, Goetia, and natural Magic. "Theurgia has long since been appropriated as the peculiar sphere of the (elder) theosophists and metaphysicians. Goetia is black magic, and natural (or white) magic has risen with healing in its wings to the proud position of an exact and progressive study."

The most sublime part of the *epopteia* (Mysteries) consisted in beholding the gods themselves invested in a resplendent light, or the highest planetary spirits. The statement of Proclus upon this subject is unequivocal: "In all the initiations and mysteries, the gods exhibit many forms of themselves, and appear in *a variety of shapes,* and sometimes a formless light of themselves is held forth to the view. Sometimes this light is according *to human form,* and sometimes it proceeds in a different shape." The ancients, unlike ourselves, could "try" the spirits and discern the difference between the good and the evil ones, the human and the elemental. They also knew that unregulated spirit intercourse, the modern Spiritualism and old-fashioned worship of the dead—brought ruin upon the individual and disaster to the community. This was not the right-hand *Magic* of old. Magic was considered as a sacred science inseparable from religion by the oldest and most civilized and learned nations. "The realistic desires of modern times have contributed to bring magic into disrepute and ridicule . . . Faith (in one's self) is an essential element in magic, and existed long before other

ideas which presume its existence. It is said that it takes a wise man to make a fool; and a man's ideas must be exalted . . . *i.e.,* his brain susceptibilities must be increased far beyond the low, miserable status of modern civilization, before he can become a true magician. For a pursuit of this science *implies* isolation, and an *abnegation of self."*

Who better than the ancient priests knew the relation between magic and "prayer"? For true magic is but the same exaltation of soul toward "the gods," which gods are in truth *but the occult powers of potencies of Nature,* personified by the learned priests themselves, in which they reverenced only the attributes of the one unknown and nameless Principle. This was the Theurgy of the Alexandrian theosophists as of their later successors during the middle ages. As Proclus ably puts it: "Ancient priests, when they considered that there is a certain alliance and sympathy in natural things to each other, and of things manifest to occult powers, and discovered that all things subsist in all, *fabricated a science sacred from this mutual sympathy and similarity.* And they applied for occult purposes, both celestial and terrene natures, by means of which, through a certain similitude, they deduced divine virtues into this inferior abode."

Theurgy is defined as "a communication with, and means of bringing down to earth, planetary spirits and angels—the 'gods of Light'." Knowledge of the inner meaning of the hierarchies, and purity of life alone can lead to the acquisition of the powers necessary for communion with them. To arrive at such an exalted goal the aspirant must be absolutely worthy and unselfish. This is true magic, the science of communicating with and directing supernal, supra-mundane Potencies, as well as of commanding those of the lower spheres; a practical knowledge of the hidden nature of such powers being known to only a few, because they are so difficult to acquire, without falling into sins against nature. "If the ancients knew but little of our mode of investigations into the secrets of nature, we know still less of their mode of research." We know as little today of the fundamental nature of "prayer within one's closet."

For "prayer" once meant that ecstatic state in which the mind was liberated from its finite consciousness, becoming one and identified with the infinite. It was a condition of complete "self-possession," and he who possessed the power was able to exercise an absolute control over all his faculties, becoming one with the all, the highest state.

# ON THE LOOKOUT

## Psychical Research

Support for H. P. Blavatsky's prophecy that psychical research would become increasingly philosophical is provided by the late G. N. M. Tyrrell's *Apparitions* (revised edition, Gerald Duckworth, London, 1953). Tyrrell was for years President of the London Society for Psychical Research and this book is often regarded as the best of his publishing efforts. Oxford Professor of Logic, H. H. Price, contributes a lengthy preface to the 1953 printing, adding an atmosphere of scholarly "respectability" to Mr. Tyrrell's subject matter.

Of particular interest to Theosophists are some paragraphs in a section entitled "Evidences of Survival," summarizing most of the conventional objections to the survival theory. The author goes on to comment, apparently citing Prof. Dodds as a typical exemplar of all-denying skepticism:

> Professor E. R. Dodds, in an interesting paper entitled 'Why I do not believe in Survival', dealt with certain *a priori* objections to it. I will summarize the most important of them very briefly, omitting those connected with ethics and religion.

## "Pre-existing Self"

> In the first place, Professor Dodds pointed out that the theory of survival appears to involve that of pre-existence; and pre-existence raises at least three unsolved difficulties. (1) Besides the factors of heredity and environment, there must, in the human being, be a third factor, namely the pre-existent self, of which psychologists have found no trace. (2) On the theory of pre-existence, the newborn infant must be a mature mind, whereas it appears to be simply an infant mind in an infant body. (3) There must be some mechanism of incarnation which lacks even the remotest biological analogue. Now, most of the apparent cogency of these objections arises from the assumption, quite natural to common sense, that all that a human being is must appear on the surface—the assumption, in fact, that a human being is simply a conscious mind tacked on to a material body. But if the human being is the vastly complex structure that psychical research is beginning to reveal (and not merely complex, but, as regards its higher phases, impenetrable to thought and of unknown profundity), there may surely be a great deal of it which does not show. In fact, it may well

be only a specialized part of it that does show. Seen against this background, the three objections to pre-existence raise, to say the least of it, a good deal less difficulty than they do when seen against the background of common sense. There may well be a third factor, a pre-existing self; in fact, there may well be many factors in the subtly woven personal complex, of whose independent existence we can see no trace from without.

## "LOCAL VEHICLES ONLY"

Another objection mentioned by Professor Dodds changes its complexion when we begin to grasp the nature of the idea-pattern. Communications ostensibly proceeding from the dead, he says, have never been convincing. They have communicated nothing of value, and have been susceptible of different explanations at different times —as originated by gods or demons in Graeco-Roman times; by the Devil in medieval times; and by departed human beings in modern times. Their validity is therefore seriously impugned. Again, the point of the objection lies in the assumption of the common-sense background that these are straightforward communications from one being to another, in the mode of human intercourse. If, however, these are not communications but idea-patterns, jointly constructed by the personalities of the living persons concerned, it is scarcely surprising that they should be coloured by the prevailing ideas of the age. On this view they are local *vehicles* only, and the question of whether or not a discarnate agency is inspiring them is still an open one.

A final question asked by Professor Dodds is how, if the mind decays with the body in old age, it can be expected to survive it. This question is, of course, bound up with the general question of psycho-physical interdependence; but the same principle is involved. The cogency of the question depends, as before, on the assumption having been made that a human being is merely a psycho-physical compound —as if it consisted solely of a conscious mind controlling a material body. In the light of the view of personality now unfolding, the point of the argument becomes less obvious, and the argument itself needs to be much more carefully stated; for it is not clear that the pure self, as distinct from certain psychological elements of the personality, decays.

## "ADVANCES IN PERSPECTIVE"

The hypothesis that there is a definable difference between man's true individuality—his inner self—and the transitory aspects of personality is receiving wider currency each year. C. J. Ducasse dwelt extensively on this possibility in his *Nature, Mind and Death,* for the first

time introducing to American scholars the concept of reincarnation as a logical possibility. He posed the basic question in this manner: Obviously many aspects of the human personality will disintegrate after death, but are we therefore entitled to assume that nothing else survives? C. Raynor Johnson's *Imprisoned Splendour* subsequently developed a theosophical theory of survival in great detail. Certainly it is of more than passing significance that men occupying responsible positions in the academic world are now rephrasing these ancient theosophical teachings.

### Exceptional Publisher's Contribution

One of the most significant publishing ventures currently in process is represented by a series of volumes on the world's great religious traditions issued by George Allen & Unwin Ltd. of London. The Editorial Board, which includes S. Radhakrishnan, a distinguished Indian Ambassador and former holder of the Oxford Chair of Eastern Philosophy and Religion, has issued the following statement to accompany each one of the slender but valuable volumes:

> In the belief that all the great religions have similarities that confirm and differences that enrich men's spiritual outlook upon the world, a number of eminent scholars have inaugurated a series which will bring out the essentials of religion in this age of doubt and discouragement.
>
> The series consists of books of three kinds: translations of imaginative, devotional and philosophic works, with Introduction or Commentary; reproductions of masterpieces of religious art; and Background Books showing the environment in which this literature and art arose and developed. Thus the series as a whole seeks to bring home to the modern world the highest spiritual achievements of mankind both in East and West.

### National Book League

Opportunity for further discussion of "Ethical and Religious Classics of East and West" is furnished by Britain's National Book League. The NBL advertises thus on the dust jacket of one of the early "Religious Classics" printings:

> The National Book League, an independent, non-profit-making body, is a unique organization. Its aim is to encourage a wider, more intelligent use of books, to give help with readers' book problems and guidance in their reading.

The League's attractive Journal, *"Books,"* is posted free to members each month. *Reader's Guides, Book Lists* and other publications are published regularly and are available to members at special rates. *The Book Information Bureau* answers scores of book inquiries from members each day.

Entrance to the well-known NBL *Exhibitions* is free to members. *Lectures,* given by eminent literary figures, and *Discussion Groups* form an important part of the League's activities.

## PLOTINUS

Among the titles already released, A. H. Armstrong's *Plotinus* shows the greatest promise of directly assisting theosophical studies. This book merits separate review treatment, but for those who will wish to procure the volume in any case, an editor's prefatory note establishes the philosophic nature of the contents:

> This volume of selections, in a new English translation, contains a reasonably extensive introduction and short notes. It is designed to provide an introduction, as complete as possible, to the thought of Plotinus (c.A.D. 204-270) the greatest non-Christian mystic and religious philosopher of the West. The selections have been chosen to illustrate all sides of his thought and teaching activity. There are passages which show him as a professional philosopher expounding the dialogues of Plato in ways traditional in the Platonic school and others which show the profound originality of his metaphysical thought: in others he appears as a moral and religious teacher, and the great passages in which he describes his mystical experience are fully represented. He is shown as both systematic philosopher and spiritual guide. Some selections from Porphyry's biography have been prefixed, to give an idea of Plotinus the man.

## HUNGER AND HOPE

The introduction to *Plotinus* contains these arresting passages:

> Mankind is hungry, but the feast is there, though it is locked up and hidden away. It is the aim of this series to put it within reach, so that, like the heroes of Homer, we may stretch forth our hands to the good cheer laid before us.
>
> No doubt the great religions differ in fundamental respects. But they are not nearly so far from one another as they seem. We think they are farther off than they are, largely because we so often misunderstand and misrepresent them. Those whose own religion is dogmatic have often been as ready to learn from other teachings as those who are liberals in religion. Above all, there is an enormous

amount of common ground in the great religions, concerning, too, the most fundamental matters.

Something of this may (it is hoped) be learnt from the books and pictures in this series. Read and pondered with a desire to learn, they will help men and women to find 'fullness of life', and peoples to live together in greater understanding and harmony. Today the earth is beautiful, but men are disillusioned and afraid. But there may come a day, perhaps not a distant day, when there will be a renaissance of man's spirit: when men will be innocent and happy amid the beauty of the world, or their eyes will be opened to see that egoism and strife are folly.

## The Gnostic Viewpoint

Of considerable interest to all theosophical students is the central thesis of a recent work by Frithjof Schuon, published in England, entitled *The Transcendent Unity of Religions.* A reviewer for the Manchester *Guardian* (March 11, 1954) thus characterizes the content:

> Frithjof Schuon's conclusions are based on scepticism concerning the historic Christian faith. Christianity in its traditional form is not literally true; it is only one expression of that deep "esoteric" truth which underlies all the great religions of the world. None of these can be said to be "truer" than the others; their external forms and their literal acceptance are only the means by which the masses, incapable of the higher metaphysics, apprehend the ultimate truth. Schuon gives us, in fact, a modern version of the ancient Gnostic systems—a gnosis or esoteric "higher knowledge" of reality which only "the few" can attain. He seems to be remarkably learned in the lore of the religions of the Orient. . . .

## Theosophical View of Religion

In the author's preface we find a recapitulation of that viewpoint on religious forms and beliefs presented by H. P. Blavatsky; also we note an echo of the First Proposition of *The Secret Doctrine:*

> In the case of intellectual intuition, knowledge is not possessed by the individual in so far as he is an individual, but in so far as in his innermost essence he is not distinct from his divine Principle. Thus metaphysical certitude is absolute because of the identity between metaphysical and religious knowledge; it may be said that the former, which can be called 'esoteric' when it is manifested through a religious symbolism, is conscious of the colourless essence of light and of its character of pure luminosity; a given religious belief, on the other hand, will assert that light is red and not green, whereas another

belief will assert the opposite; both will be right in so far as they distinguish light from darkness but not in so far as they identify it with a particular colour. This very rudimentary example is designed to show that the religious point of view, because it is based in the minds of believers on a revelation and not on a knowledge that is accessible to each one of them (an unrealizable condition for a large human collectivity), will of necessity confuse the symbol or form with the naked and supra-formal Truth, while metaphysic, which can only be assimilated to a particular "point of view" in a purely provisional sense, will be able to make use of the same symbol or form as a means of expression, while being aware of its relativity. That is why each of the great and intrinsically orthodox religions can, through its dogmas, rites and other symbols, serve as a means of expression all the truths known directly by the eye of the Intellect, the spiritual organ which is called in Moslem esotericism the "eye of the heart."

## APPRECIATION OF EASTERN PHILOSOPHY

Mr. Schuon, whose acquaintance with Eastern religion has been in large part derived from French sources (*Transcendent Unity* was first written in that language) also provides an interesting explanation of the rationale behind esoteric teachings now available in exoteric works:

It might . . . reasonably be asked for what human and cosmic reasons truths which may in a very general sense be called "esoteric" should be brought to light and made explicit at the present time, in an age which is so little inclined to speculation. There is indeed something abnormal in this, but it lies, not in the fact of the exposition of these truths, but in the general conditions of our age, which marks the end of a great cyclic period of terrestrial humanity—the end of a *Maha-yuga* according to Hindu cosmology—and so must recapitulate or manifest again in one way or another everything that is included in the cycle, in conformity with the adage 'extremes meet'; thus things which are in themselves abnormal may become necessary by reason of the conditions just referred to. From a more individual point of view, that of mere expediency, it must be admitted that the spiritual confusion of our times has reached such a pitch that the harm which might in principle befall certain people from contact with the truths in question is compensated by the advantages others will derive from the self-same truths; again, the term 'esotericism' has been so often misused in order to cloak ideas which are as unspiritual as they are dangerous, and what is known of esoteric doctrines has been so frequently plagiarized and deformed—not to mention the fact that the outward and readily exaggerated incompatibility of the different traditional forms greatly discredits, in the minds of most of our

contemporaries, all tradition, religious or otherwise—that it is not only desirable but even incumbent upon one to give some idea of what true esotericism is and what it is not.

## Esotericism in Doctrine

Concluding his preface, Mr. Schuon indicates that while truths formerly kept from the profane need some kind of representation it must be recognized that they cannot be accurately communicated by definitive intellectual forms. Individual intuition in respect to esoteric study is not only an aid, but a necessity:

> To come now to the main subject of this book, it must be emphasized that the unity of the different religions, or, more generally, of the different traditional forms, is not only unrealizable on the external level, that of the forms themselves, but ought not to be realized at that level, even were this possible, for in that case the revealed forms would be deprived of their sufficient reason. If the expression 'transcendent unity' is used, it means that the unity of the traditional forms, whether they are religious or supra-religious in their nature, must be realized in a purely inward and spiritual way and without prejudice to any particular form. The antagonisms between these forms no more affect the one universal Truth than the antagonisms between opposing colours affect the transmission of the one uncoloured light (to return to the illustration used already). Just as every colour, by its negation of darkness and its affirmation of light, provides the possibility of discovering the ray which makes it visible and of tracing this ray back to its luminous source, so all forms, all symbols, all religions, all dogmas, by their negation of error and their affirmation of Truth, make it possible to follow the ray of Revelation, which is none other than the ray of the Intellect, back as far as its Divine Source.

## Oversimplified Criticism

In defending the Gnostic tradition, Mr. Schuon takes note of something often mentioned in THEOSOPHY articles and Lookout commentaries—that its critics often airily dispose of any theosophical perspectives by use of the word Pantheism. Schuon calls for more study and reflection on this point, writing that "Pantheism is the great resource of all those who want to brush aside esotericism with the minimum of inconvenience and who, for example, imagine that they can understand a given metaphysical or initiatory text because they know the grammar of the language in which it is written. It is assumed by 'specialists' and 'critics' that there is nothing which is beyond their

powers; such an attitude resembles that of children who, having found books intended for adults, judge them according to their ignorance, caprice or laziness."

It should not be assumed from this review that the *Transcendent Unity of Religions* is a thoroughly theosophical document; the concepts of Karma and Reincarnation are given no attention, nor does the author seem altogether free from occasional literary dependence upon the Christian God symbolism. But we do find extraordinarily clear passages such as the foregoing, evidencing a further permeation of the intellectual atmosphere by perspectives first made current in the Western world by H. P. Blavatsky.

## WHAT KIND OF A WORLD?

Another book, *In for Life,* by Tom Runyon (Norton, 1953), recently added to the growing body of "prison literature," focusses attention upon the useless barbarity of capital punishment. The author is now serving a life sentence at Iowa State Penitentiary. After demonstrating that he has attained a philosophical adjustment to his own unfortunate situation, Runyon considers the obligation of society to its units. He asks: "If I were building a world, what laws would I devise?"

> Laws in my world would be simple, with no confusing terms at all, so a citizen could understand and respect them. "You shall not kill" would be the first law, and it would apply to society also—there would be no death penalty, for two wrongs would not make a right. "You shall not steal" would apply equally to light-fingered merchant and to highway robber. A jury would decide the degree of guilt in each case, for no attempt would be made to define all human foibles in the statutes. "You shall not injure another" might be the one necessary law.

## QUICKENING OF THE PUBLIC CONSCIENCE

The excellent reception of *In for Life* is another indication that the time is ripe for continued prodding of the social conscience in regard to the death penalty. Adverse reactions to two much-publicized executions—the Rosenbergs in the United States and John Reginald Christie in England—caused columnist Curt L. Heymann to make a comparative study of the statutes of twenty-four European countries in regard to the death penalty. The results of Mr. Heymann's study were printed in the

Los Angeles *Times* under the heading, "Europe Reacts Against Capital Punishment." Here is a summary of the figures:

> Only one-third of them, eight, had abolished capital punishment. It was still in force in 13, and it was in abeyance in three. It is noteworthy that all Communist nations, which preen themselves as being "peoples' democracies," have the penalty of death. England and France execute criminals, and so do Italy, Greece and Spain. [Yet] in France, where all criminal acts resulting in loss of life and even attempted murder of public officials are punishable by death, a group of Socialist Deputies have just moved to abolish capital punishment.
>
> The eight European nations that have abolished capital punishment are the Netherlands, Sweden, Switzerland, Norway, Portugal, Austria, Luxembourg and West Germany. [And even in the United States, Mr. Heymann notes, there are six states that have no death penalty.] Portugal takes a unique position in refusing to extradite a criminal to a country that enforces the death penalty.
>
> The three countries where capital punishment is in abeyance are Belgium, Denmark and Finland.

From this comparative study and from expressions of public opinion in the press, Mr. Heymann concludes:

> It appears that the conscience of the Old World has been guided by a humane code of ethics, and that public opinion is rather inclined to replace the Biblical vengeance of an "eye for an eye" with a more tolerant application of justice—one more in line with the moral principles of our time and civilization.

## The Art and the Science of Healing

In the Jan. 9 issue of the *Saturday Review,* Dana W. Atchley (professor of clinical medicine at Columbia University) surveys the enormous progress made in the practice of medicine during the past four decades. He begins his article, "The Healer and the Scientist," by stating that: "The medicine that I learned on the wards in 1915 presents almost as sharp a contrast to that taught today as would the 1915 variety to that of Hippocrates 2300 years earlier." He elucidates:

> During these four decades the old art of healing has at last been fused with the young science of medicine. By the art of healing I mean the skilful and creative dispensing of any type of relief to the sick of body or heart. Like all the arts, it can be measured only in terms of the inspiration which it evokes. The science of medicine, on the other hand, includes all of the rich and demonstrable results of the application of man's intellectual faculties to problems related to his health. The art of healing is as old as recorded history; the science of healing is relatively young and only lately stands on its own feet.

## COMPASSION IS NO MERE ATTRIBUTE

> Man's urge to heal and comfort his neighbor is a basic human trait and the relief that comes from the sharing of pain and fear is almost universal. The ailing are highly susceptible to the art of the healer, no matter what his methods. . . . Foremost among these are sympathy, of which many are capable, and compassion, a far rarer quality. For sympathy is given, hence may be simulated, may unconvincingly arise from a sterile heart; compassion is felt, and its depth and integrity establish a mood that calms and reassures almost wordlessly but with full conviction.

## THE PRACTICE OF MEDICINE

Unfortunately, says Dr. Atchley, "the healer was not content to rely on the sound and safe powers of his warmth and understanding, so—whether because he himself wished to offer, or because his patient demanded, more substantial therapy—it became the practice to resort to animal sacrifices, herb brews, major and minor magic of all sorts." Thus, when the "physician" took over the practice of healing, according to Dr. Atchley, he also succumbed to "the urge for spectacular action, inherited from the magician, which pushed him into many foolish and harmful practices": "bleeding white" a patient in need of transfusion; starving those already suffering from malnutrition; "bedevilling" others with leeches and blisters. "There was little attempt to appraise the value of these measures either theoretically or pragmatically."

## THE SCIENCE OF MEDICINE

During this period of empiric, authoritarian medicine, the unique personality of the healer and the trained observation of the scientist were alike excluded from medical practice. Not until doctors were given full-time professorships in universities, says Dr. Atchley, and scientists were admitted into hospitals was there that intermingling of clinician and laboratician which is "largely responsible for the quality of modern medicine." As Dr. Atchley observes:

> The synthesis of the healer and the scientist has produced two outstanding changes in the practice of medicine: the healer has guided us back to a primary preoccupation with a person, an individual human being, and the scientist has given us the power of analysis and integration and has led us to discard orthodoxy and illogical tradition.
>
> Interest in the individual has always been evinced by the physician with a true instinct for healing, but in the past two or three decades it has increasingly been acclaimed as a primary objective. . . . This

change is not simply an upsurge of humanism. It is the practical effect of an increasing recognition of the direct interaction of the personality and the environment in determining the nature of disease and in directing its management. With interest focused so intensely on the individual our goal reaches beyond health to become happiness.

## The Delphic Oracle of Healing

Dr. Atchley's analysis gives more serious consideration of the intuitive healer than is customary by a member of the medical fraternity. Many of his remarks are in line with passages in "Hints on Healing," an article printed in these pages years ago (THEOSOPHY 24: 509):

> Whether applied to the body, the mind, or the soul, healing is the noblest of all sciences and arts. . . . The problem, always inscrutable, continually presses for solution—a solution, not a mere opiate or palliative.
>
> Theosophy is in the world "for the healing of nations." The Theosophist should feel more than an intellectual appreciation of the philosophy of altruism he professes. He should be inspired to study and work without cease to inform and educate himself, to be able "to spread broadcast as widely and as quickly as possible" those fundamental truths to which mankind is lost and which alone can restore the Golden Age when men knew how to "work with Nature, not against her."
>
> No man is so sick that he does not instantly recognize, instantly respond to the Presence of a genuine Healer. Whether we call that presence the atmosphere, the aura, the magnetism of the beneficent and competent friend, matters nothing at all. . . . It is within the power of every sincere Theosophist to awaken, to increase, to bestow, to radiate this higher *Siddhi.*
>
> The healing atmosphere which envelopes the true friend of humanity will, if intelligently studied by the healer himself, be found to well up from that spiritual essence whose manifestations we speak of as intuition. Intuition is as capable of observation, of study, of development, as any other principle of our being. The counterpart of intuition in the natural healer is the awakening of the inner principle we know as instinct in the patient. . . . In time the former patient becomes himself a healing presence. The Delphic oracle may still be consulted by any so disposed.

Although not every would-be physician is a "natural" healer, the influence of such instructors as Dr. Atchley in medical universities should tend to develop at least some aptitudes in that direction, so that the physician and the Theosophist may increasingly find themselves to be understanding allies.

## AN ECHO FROM FORMER YEARS

A subscriber, on reading "Music, a Divine Art" (THEOSOPHY, Feb ruary, 1954), called our attention to an excerpt from William Jame chapter on Mysticism in *The Varieties of Religious Experience:*

> In mystical literature such self-contradictory phrases as "dazzling obscurity," "whispering silence," "teeming desert," are continually met with. They prove that not conceptual speech, but music rather, is the element through which we are best spoken to by mystical truth. Many mystical scriptures are indeed little more than musical compositions.

Dr. James then quotes from *The Voice of the Silence:*

> He who would hear the voice of Nada, "the Soundless Sound," and comprehend it, he has to learn the nature of Dhâranâ. . . . When to himself his form appears unreal, as do on waking all the forms he sees in dreams; when he has ceased to hear the many, he may discern the ONE—the inner sound which kills the outer. . . . For then the soul will hear, and will remember. And then to the inner ear will speak THE VOICE OF THE SILENCE. . . . And now thy *Self* is lost in SELF, *thyself* unto THYSELF, merged in the SELF from which thou first didst radiate. . . . Behold! thou hast become the Light, thou hast become the Sound, thou art thy Master and thy God. Thou art THYSELF the object of thy search: the VOICE unbroken, that resounds throughout eternities, exempt from change, from sin exempt, the seven sounds in one, THE VOICE OF THE SILENCE. *Om Tat Sat.*

## THE INTUITIVE PSYCHOLOGIST

On this passage, Dr. James makes the following comment:

> These words, if they do not awaken laughter as you receive them, probably stir chords within you which music and language touch in common. Music gives us ontological messages which non-musical criticism is unable to contradict, though it may laugh at our foolishness in minding them. There is a verge of the mind which these things haunt; and whispers therefrom mingle with the operations of our understanding, even as the waters of the infinite ocean send their waves to break among the pebbles that lie upon our shores.

Often called America's "First Psychologist," universally regarded a a man of vision and profundity, William James' use of H.P.B.'s *Voic* —and his understanding of some of its implications—are worth remem bering.